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Slater, George Atwood

Westchester county, the gateway of the metropolis...

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Westchester County---

The Gateway of The Metropolis of The Nation

by

HONORABLE GEORGE A. SLATER, D.C.L.
Surrogate of Westchester County,
New York

An Address before the Canadian Club of the City of New York, at a Luncheon in the Club House, Saturday, December Fifteenth, Nineteen Twenty-Three

Feb 5, 1924
Rec.

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Canadian Club:

I have been requested by my friend, your very worthy President, to address you upon "Westchester County, the Gateway of the Metropolis of the Nation." It is difficult indeed to speak to gentlemen born in Canada regarding the natural scenic beauty of Westchester County. This summer I toured through Canada from Vancouver to Quebec, and was impressed with the scenic beauties and boundless resources.

My personal friend, Congressman Wainwright, used to speak of Westchester County as the "Imperial Rural County of New York." It was such years ago, but with the advent of the millionaire, the motor, and the desire to live out of doors, it has become the great park, home place, and golf ground for Greater New York, and the world.

We of Westchester County feel, and I hope to impress it upon you gentlemen that our county is the greatest county within our country's borders. I speak of Westchester County not as Proctor Knott spoke of the glories of Duluth. Westchester County is real, it is located, it has a history, its people are virile, it is a living, pulsating governmental unit.

It was erected in 1683, and has the proud distinction of being one of the twelve original counties of the State of New York, established under the English rule. It is situated in the triangle created by the great Hudson River on the west, the Connecticut State line and the beautiful body of water, Long Island Sound on the east. It is touched on the south by the metropolis of our country, and it extends northward to the rugged hill country of Putnam County. Upon its face are rivers and lakes, valleys and mountains, hills and dales, fertile meadows and fair gardens. It contains a population of over 400,000 souls living in four cities, 26 villages, and extending over the territory of 19 townships. Passing

either on the old Albany Post, or the Boston Post Roads, it is quite impossible to tell whether you are in one municipality, or in another because of the density of population. With the large number of local municipal governments and the constant increase of people, many problems are presented and are pressing for solution.

In the olden days, in fact to the year 1874, Westchester County extended southerly to the Harlem River, now in New York City, and what is known as Kingsbridge, Spuyten Duyvil, Morrisania, Fordham, Tremont, West Farms, Westchester, Throggs Neck, now a part of the great Borough of the Bronx, was formerly of the Imperial Rural County of Westchester. It was indeed at its formation a larger county. It has never lost its greatness or prestige. It is still dominant.

Westchester County is consecrated ground. It is richer than other commonwealths in formative recollections. In every section it indicates the labor and sacrifice of a people's ambition to secure our national independence. In speaking of Westchester County, in truth you cannot evade its early history. The county was settled in the earliest days by the Huguenots in New Rochelle; by the Quakers in the middle portion of the county; by the Walloons along the Hudson, and by the English who came from Long Island and Massachusetts and Connecticut and settled along the shores of Long Island Sound in the Towns of Rye, Mamaroneck, Eastchester, and Westchester. The plan of the English was to create Lords of Manors with manorial holdings. Lord Pell held the Manor of Pelham, which extended from New Rochelle southerly along the Sound, including what is now Pelham Bay Park. The Morrises of Morrisania had a large manorial grant. Caleb Heathcote was given a grant comprising a part of Mamaroneck township, with thousands of acres to the north. Frederick Philipse was granted land at Yonkers, extending far to the north and east.

The Van Cortlandts took the great territory along the Hudson at Croton River. The old Van Cortlandt manor house is still standing, well preserved, containing valuable early records, pictures of members of that family, and heirlooms, just east of the Albany Post Road at Croton River, near Harmon. As the settlers came in, towns were erected, officers selected, land allotted, deeds were taken from the Indians, and transfers made to the settlers. The town governments of Westchester County were based upon the Pilgrim compact, as framed and signed in the cabin of the Mayflower in 1620. These Pilgrims covenanted and combined together as a civil body politic for "their better ordering and preservation and for the general good of the colony," in which "they promised all due submission and obedience." Royal patents were granted, and town meetings controlled public matters. Town governments were erected and people lived and toiled and saved and gained, so that in our time we enjoy the result of a beneficent form of government.

During the Revolutionary period this county was known as the neutral ground. It was marauded by Royalist and harried by Continental—by skinner and cowboy. New York City was possessed by the British. Washington's Army was in Northern Westchester County at the Highlands. In the county was fought the battles of Pelham Heights and White Plains. Andre was captured here and held at the Mill, Colonel Jameson's headquarters at Armonk. The retreat after the battle of White Plains permitted Washington and his army to proceed to the south, and it was his army which brought the Revolutionary War to an end in the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown.

The county has produced, reared and attracted many men who became the leaders and celebrated figures of their day. John Jay, twice Governor of the State, and the first Chief Justice of the United States, was a resident of Westchester County, living at Bedford and at

Rye. He is buried in the Jay family burial ground situated between the Post Road and Milton Harbor at Rye. Governor Daniel D. Tompkins, of our State, Vice President of the United States, comes of Westchester County stock. Governor Hoffman of New York was a resident of what is now Ossining. Thomas Paine, the free thinker and great pamphleteer in the Revolutionary period lived at New Rochelle. Lewis Morris, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, owned the Manor of Morrisania in the southern part of the county.

Joseph Rodman Drake, the poet, lived here, and so did J. Fenimore Cooper, the author of "The Spy" and the "Leather Stocking Tales," Washington Irving, the author, Horace Greeley, the journalist, and Governor Samuel J. Tilden enjoyed homes within our borders. Peter Cooper, the philanthropist and founder of Cooper Union, was born and reared in Peekskill; Peter Faneuil, who erected Faneuil Hall, that Cradle of Liberty in Boston, Massachusetts, was of Huguenot descent and was born in New Rochelle. Chauncey M. Depew, the world renowned orator, politician, statesman, diplomat, lawyer and railroad president, belongs to us. He was born and bred in old Cortlandt town. Lucretia Mott, the noted Quakeress, lived in the early part of the 19th century at Purchase. Fanny Crosby, the blind hymnologist, resided at Katonah.

I emphasize Westchester County's natural location, Westchester County's history, and Westchester County's men and women to paint you the background of the picture of the Westchester County we observe today. We as a county during the last generation have changed. The farmer, as he was known, is gone, and with him has vanished agricultural pursuits, husbandry, orchards and ploughed fields. The rustic no longer dwells here. His land has been acquired by those of different antecedents, who have parked it, and we are being very fast transformed, not unlike the country counties of England. The

distaste of the younger generation for rural life and the work of the farm has caused the early holdings to be vacated, and the Captains of Industry and Leaders of Finance of the country have acquired them for their country estates.

We have a growing citizenship of the most desirable people of the nation attracted to us by our location, by our history, by our traditions, by their neighbors. We have large manufacturing centers in Yonkers and Port Chester, and ideal home communities in the Pelhams, Bronxville, Larchmont and Scarsdale. We have cities of homes in New Rochelle, Mount Vernon and White Plains, hill towns in Mount Kisco and Bedford, and communities affording large acreage in Yorktown, Somers, North Salem, Lewisboro and North Castle.

In the development of Westchester County travel has forced its way through its confines, not alone along the highways leading north and south and to the east, the widened trail of the Indian and the path of the settler of pre-Revolutionary days; but by railroads, great steel arteries, of which we have fine in number, not forgetting our trolley system. One of the pressing problems is how to transfer by local transit the people who daily come and go to their occupations in Greater New York.

One of the beauty spots of Westchester County, however, to the great detriment of the requirements of the people of our local municipalities has been created by the acquisition by Greater New York of our rivers, lakes, ponds and streams, which have been enlarged for the purpose of installing that most wonderful water supply of the greater city. A day's ride by auto about the lakes of this great water system will not begin to give the observer a complete comprehension of its vastness. Ponds have been enlarged, streams widened and lakes connected. The hillsides thereabouts, many acres in extent, have been reforested until the whole countryside within the watershed has every appearance of the scenery at Lake Kil-

larney and its environs, and suggests to one the beautiful lake and mountain scenes in Canada.

The picture is not complete without a reference to the parks and parkways. Bronx Parkway connects New York City with the center of the county at Kensico Dam by a great boulevard and parkway 16 miles in length. The County Park system in the hands of a commission, charged with comprehensive powers, is now active and promises to be the most extensive and beautiful in the whole world. Many acres have been acquired along the Hudson River and the Sound, as well as in the interior. Millions of money will be expended to acquire and beautify these parks and in order to be comprehended the entire scheme must be visualized. The proposed State boulevard will connect the Bronx Parkway with the Mohansic Reservation and will then lead on to the new bridge over the Hudson to Bear Mountain Park acress the river. The residents will live upon parkways, so-called farms and country estates will adjoin boulevards and the spirit of the outdoor will prevail and beckon the denizen of the greater city to the carefree life, health imparting air and the holiday spirit which will prevail in Westchester County.

The growing population has brought its problems of transit, of schools, of parks, of health, of water, and of highways, the lack of which have culminated in a study by a commission now operating under legislative enactment upon the question relating to a new form of county government in Westchester County necessary to meet modern conditions.

A study of this abstruse and difficult problem in municipal government is being carried on by a committee of thirty representative men and women of the county. The study has developed the fact that we, a county of 400,000 population, spending annually nearly $3,000,000, with an assessed valuation of $800,000,000, have a form of county government of ancient vintage without an

executive head. No one in official life responsible to the people is charged with directing, overseeing, visualizing and meeting the future needs and requirements of the people of the county. As a member of this body I am divulging no secret when I state that the commission believes that the county should have an executive head. The problems confronting the commission makes the task a hard one. It is the first time in the history of local county government, when a county has become so populous, where the people desire to control their own local village, town and city affairs, and where the need is urgent for the creation of centralized executive power to undertake the control and direction of those larger matters which only the credit of the whole county may bring into being and sustain.

The people are interested in those agencies which have a distinctive regard for and directly benefit the population. The schools, public and private, are of the highest type, a great State Normal College is being established; churches of every denomination, presided over by pastors and pulpit orators of note, direct and provide for the spiritual well-being of our people; affairs of health and hygiene and public charity under official leadership have been developed in our county to a very marked degree.

From a commercial point of view Westchester County will benefit from the Port Authority plan affecting New York City and its environs, now being developed as it dominates at least one half of our present territory. The ample and deep harbors along the Sound and the Hudson River provide for the extension of maritime projects of great magnitude. We have the space and the waterways for co-ordinating and extending the trade of the chief port of our country.

Westchester County needs no encomium. As Daniel Webster said of Massachusetts: "There she stands," with a history of three hundred years behind her, with nature's beauty, possibilities, healthfulness, happy living, splendid

citizenship, unrivalled by any other county of the world.

The county is a municipal unit of the State and the State is a unit of the Nation, and the things I speak of as relating to Westchester County can only exist, continue and endure as long as our national system of constitutional government endures. The form of our national unity is the foundation rock which develops and continues ideals and supports society, which provides happiness, and gives us the pursuit of life with liberty amidst such congenial and secure surroundings.

It is none too soon for the type of citizens such as we have in our county, to lay aside some of their cares, their business affairs, and their endeavors to augment their worldly assets, and take up the study of the business of government, to participate in the business of government.

I speak to men of English ancestry, to members of English speaking peoples, and say, to our blood is committed the charge to carry on the ideals of English civilization to succeeding generations. The American Constitution has given to us the gift of sovereignty. Sovereignty in England is lodged in the House of Commons. It may make and unmake laws. There is no paramount law. Sovereignity in America is lodged in you and me, and we live under a limited constitution,—a fundamental law. Our constitution created a union of states; provided a bill of rights, a charter of civil liberty; protected ourselves from tyranny by our own government by the right to use the courts; created a Republican form of government, a representative form of government, a control by the majority of the people.

In order to participate in the business of government intelligently, it becomes the duty of our citizens to know the constitution and its safeguards, as well as to realize the dangers that always lurk about a government. We speak much of our Constitution, but do we understand it? Have we read it understandingly? We have not been

many years at the business of government. To indicate the swiftness of the coming and going of governments of the world, let me state that we are the oldest constitutional government on the earth, and we are still very, very young as a nation.

Socialism today is one of the dangers to our form of government. This danger is not well appreciated by the average citizen of Westchester County, or of the State, or the Nation.

We may have weaknesses in our form of government. Benjamin Franklin, however, said while the Constitution was not altogether to his liking, he felt it was the best we could obtain. I hardly believe that our people are willing to substitute the government of the Soviet. But, still thousands of electors, at every election, are voting the Socialist ticket, whether they understand what it means, or not. Our safety of continuation in the present constitutional form of government lies largely in property rights which are secured to the people under the Constitution. And it may be well to tell the story that is related by Doctor Nicholas Murray Butler:

A man was asked, "What is Socialism?"

"Well," he said, "Socialism is when you give half of what you have to the other man. You divide your property with the rest of the people."

"Well," says Mike, "if you had a farm of 300 acres, Pat, would you give half of it away?"

"I would, indeed," says Pat.

"If you had six cows, would you give away half of them?"

"Indeed I would," says Pat.

"If you had two pigs, would you give away half of them?"

"I would not, I have two pigs," says Pat.

Pat's answer is the reason why the American people will never undertake Socialism, or a communal form of

government. But the insidious propaganda proceeds—the peril is there.

There are other dangers, but I will only refer to one other and an extremely potent cause for alarm. It is the effort to change the moorings and foundations of the federal constitution by amendments. Without criticising any amendment to the federal constitution heretofore enacted, I feel, nevertheless, that we should leave the constitution as drawn and adopted by the founding fathers alone. It is the fulgent light of clear purpose, of unwavering will.

> " * * * like the hallowed flame
> Of vestal fire, that dies not, year on year."

We should control our future through the laws of Congress and of the States. The Federal Constitution today guards a man in the enjoyment of his personal liberty, his property and his pursuit of happiness, whether violated by the Federal or State Government. Thus is preserved to the individual that liberty of action and that equality of opportunity which it took a thousand years of struggle to secure from monarchy and aristocracy. The judicial branch of the Federal Government is vested with the final duty and power of making effective this protection of the individual in his right against the sovereign people.

We hear about amendments of various kind and character, and we know how easy it is to effect them. It is a fact that legislators in Congress and in State legislatures lack political courage, when pulled and hauled by committees with minority views. They seem to believe that such minorities elected them. Propositions having some popular approval, or offered to meet the needs of a present situation are adopted by the Congress and passed on to the several state legislatures for concurrence. The legislatures of the States, with similar lack of courage usually adopt them. Principle is not always considered, policy

always. Therefore, any offered amendment merits the serious attention of you men. It has to do with the business of your government, the greatest business in the Nation. You should understand them.

An amendment destructive of the power of the United States Supreme Court is to be urged upon the present Congress by men and interests of influence and power. They find fault with the decisions of that great court upon social and economic matters,—decisions that are rendered by a vote of five to four. So I warn you to begin the study of the question. They would amend the Supreme Court out of the Constitution. There are men who contend that at least seven votes of the nine justices of the court should be required to declare an act of Congress unconstitutional.

The amendment requiring a vote of seven out of nine judges for a decision holding a law to be unconstitutional would bring about a minority rule. Three dissents would overcome six judges voting to hold an act unconstitutional. Minority rule is abhorrent to our system of government even though the minority members' views may raise a "rational doubt."

Why should the clear convictions of the minority of the Court, overcome the clear convictions of the majority?

And, again, if the plan is to have the minority rule whenever a majority think a statute is *unconstitutional,* why not have the reverse, and let the minority rule whenever the majority think a statute is *constitutional?*

And there are others who will go farther to amend the Constitution, so that should the Supreme Court pronounce a law of Congress unconstitutional, the very reenactment by Congress of the statute set aside, shall nullify the action of the Court, and the law shall remain in full force and effect.

Who has a grievance against the Supreme Court of the United States?

What are the unjust decisions wherein certain laws have been set aside as unconstitutional? Must we change to meet every temporary spasm of popular passion?

The effect of a proposed amendment permitting Congress to overturn a decision of the Court affecting a constitutional question was fully considered as one of the possible objections at the time the Federal Constitution was being considered by the States. Alexander Hamilton in Paper No. 78 of the Federalist papers, answered this very contention and said:—"The complete independence of the courts of justice is peculiarly essential in a limited Constitution. By a limited Constitution I understand one which contains certain specified exceptions to the legislative authority; such, for instance, as that it shall pass no bills of attainder, no *ex post facto* laws, and the like. Limitations of this kind can be preserved in practice no other way than through the medium of *courts of justice,* whose duty it must be to *declare all acts contrary to the manifest tenor of the Constitution void.*"

"There is no position which depends on clearer principles, than that every act of a delegated authority, contrary to the tenor of the commission under which it is exercised, is void. No legislative act, therefore, contrary to the Constitution can be valid * * * The interpretation of the laws is the proper and peculiar province of the courts. A Constitution, is, in fact, and must be regarded by the judges, as a fundamental law. It, therefore, belongs to them to ascertain its meaning, as well as the meaning of any particular act proceeding from the legislative body. If there should happen to be an irreconcilable variance between the two, that which has the superior obligation and validity ought, of course, to be preferred; or, in other words, the Constitution ought to be preferred to the statute, the intention of the people to the intention of their agents."

"Nor does this conclusion by any means suppose the superiority of the judicial to the legislative power. It

only supposes that the power of the people is superior to both; and that, where the will of the legislature declared in this statute stands in opposition to that of the people declared in the Constitution, the judges ought to be governed by the latter rather than the former."

The present general attack upon the Supreme Court of the United States is not the first assault upon that Court. One hundred and twenty-two years ago, soon after the formation of the government, there was a determined assault on the judiciary involving the federal courts, in which the two dominant parties, the Federalist and the Republican, participated. At that period John Marshall was the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, and it was through his influence that he made the Supreme Court a stabilizing power, and the mighty force it is in the government. The great Congress fight in 1801-1802 to amend the Judiciary Act, with threat of the impeachment of the Judges, centered around the question: the power of the Supreme Court to annul acts of Congress. It was said if the act to repeal the Judiciary Act of 1801 was passed, that John Marshall would declare it void. This was never directly nullified. But in February, 1803, when the Supreme Court convened, the famous case of Marbury *v.* Madison was pending. This case, reported in 1 Cranch 137, involved unimportant litigation in itself, was used by the Chief Justice at a critical hour in the history of the court to pronounce the power of the Supreme Court to declare invalid acts of Congress that violate the Constitution. The assertion of such a right in the Supreme Court had never before been declared by that court. From that time until the present such a doctrine has been accepted by the court, by the Congress, by the states, and by the people as the law of the land. In the Virginia Convention of 1788 Marshall had voiced the same fundamental principle. He considered that principle woven into the very fiber of the Nation's fundamental law. It asserted and established the power of the

Supreme Court to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional. The great Chief Justice in Marbury *v.* Madison said: "The people have an elemental right to establish such principles for their future government as shall most conduce to their own happiness." He points out that the constitution of the United States not only grants certain powers of government, but also established certain *express limitations upon the government.* To what purpose, he asks, "are powers limited and to what purpose is that limitation committed in writing, if these limits may at any time be passed by those intended to be restrained?" Marshall found in the constitution itself support for his conclusion. "In the first place it has provided that the judicial power shall extend to all cases in law and equity arising under the constitution. In the second place, it is directed that judicial officers shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support this constitution. In the third place the fundamental law declares that this constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof shall be the supreme law of the land."

Beveridge in his monumental work, the Life of John Marshall, says: "This principle is wholly and exclusively American. It is America's original contribution to the science of law. The assertion of it, under the conditions related in this chapter, was the deed of a great man. One of narrower vision and smaller courage never would have done what Marshall did. In his management and decision of this case, at the time and under the circumstances, Marshall's acts and words were those of a statesman of the first rank." And Marbury *v.* Madison was accepted and it has endured. Now it is being assailed and it is sought to be overturned by Constitutional Amendment.

The charge that the Supreme Court has usurped the power to annul acts of Congress is a false statement, whether made by men, or written in party platforms. History refutes it.

The federal courts entertain a very strong presumption that congressional legislation is constitutional, and in consequence of such presumption history disclosed during the courts' duration, only forty-nine cases declaring laws unconstitutional, and only nine cases of which were decided by five to four vote.

The conception of the power to annul acts of Congress has recently been spoken of by Mr. Justice Sutherland in Massachusetts *v.* Mellon, 43 Supreme Court Reporter 597, 601. He says: "* * * * We have no power *per se* to review and annul acts of Congress on the ground that they are unconstitutional. That question may be considered only when the justification for some direct injury suffered or threatened, presenting a justifiable issue, is made to rest upon such an act.

"Then the power exercised is that of ascertaining and declaring the law applicable to the controversy * * * *

"Here the parties plaintiff have no such case. Looking through forms of words to the substance of their complaint, it is merely that officials of the executive department of the government are executing and will execute an act of Congress asserted to be unconstitutional; and this we are asked to prevent. To do so would be, not to decide a judicial controversy, but to assume a position of authority over the governmental acts of another and coequal department, an authority which plainly we do not possess."

The effort to amend the federal constitution and diminish the powers of the Supreme Court by transferring to the Congress the power to pass upon the question of the constitutionality of their own laws is an assault upon our federal judiciary and, if successful, would tend to paralyze and bring about the beginning of the destruction of our system of government. It would permit the Congress to pass legislative laws, with constitutional authority in the Congress under the contemplated amendments to declare such legislative laws constitutional, if the Su-

preme Court declared otherwise. Even in this day of constitutional hysteria, when the Comptroller of the City of New York has been found in contempt of a federal court, and great effort made to have the President direct a pardon, Senator Copeland shows every evidence of having a conservative and judicial mind and a regard for the federal constitution, which should cause others of less renown to have a greater regard for that instrument of government. He says: "I am opposed to any kind of legislation that has to do with changing the powers of the courts. It has taken us one hundred and thirty-four years to build up our judicial system to its present state. There is enough power in public sentiment to handle any miscarriage of justice without attempting to justify new legislation that might hamper the courts. I am opposed to any attack on the judiciary. I think we can get along as we are as long as we have an enlightened public opinion."

The asserted right of the Supreme Court to declare acts of Congress invalid, has long been maintained. It has been a unifying principle, contributing to our security and peace. It is the supreme law of the land. Why should the people change their organic law, to permit their representatives or agents in Congress to declare their legislative laws constitutional? If learned judges disagree as to the constitutionality of laws affecting social and economic questions, can we reasonably expect nearly five hundred Congressmen, from every walk of life, to vote an intelligent decision? The limits of the Constitution—the bill of rights, the protection to the people against their own government is cast asunder. No constitutional restraint would exist. Legislative law would control. Any law passed by Congress, and decreed by Congress to be constitutional would be constitutional. The bill of rights would be worthless in the absence of a judiciary to stand between the people and the constituted power of the executive and legislative branches of gov-

ernment. Hence the importance of the courts in our system of government, and hence the anxiety of certain elements in the land to destroy the authority of the courts. George Cabot, the New England Federalist, who feared and distrusted "excessive democracy" said: "There will be neither justice, nor stability in any system, if some material parts of it are not independent of popular control." We would change from a limited constitution to a pure democracy of the multitude. Let us have a sense of our own best interest. Let us say as Webster once said when speaking of the Monroe Doctrine: "I will neither help to erase it or tear it out; nor shall it be by any act of mine blurred or blotted——"

The people will understand that the proposed transfer, by constitutional amendment, the power to annul acts of Congress, declared by John Marshall as existing in the Supreme Court of the United States, by virtue of the Constitution itself, written in that instrument to protect the people from their own government, is an unrighteous design, destructive of our system of self-government. Our President, Calvin Coolidge, in his first message to the Congress, enunciated a principle, as strong and as rugged as his native Vermont hills, when in referring to the final determinations of the American people, employed significant words when he said: "Whenever they declare a righteous purpose, there need be no doubt that they will be heard."

And, there are other dangers, and because of their existence people such as you, citizens of our great county, and state and nation, should take a greater part in the business of government. There are other menaces. Our many local communities, our villages, our towns, our cities, our county offer many favorable opportunities for the elector to attend the primaries, to learn to understand the science of government, to hold office, to assume the responsibility of American

citizenship and maintain the liberty guaranteed by the constitution. By these methods you may take part in your great business—the business of your government. This I urge upon you.

I have spoken briefly today of Westchester County, of its history, of its beauty, of its traditions, of some of its problems, and of its splendid citizenship. And now, in closing, I will but briefly speak of its future as the gateway of the metropolis of the nation.

Our people have evidenced a desire to live their life in separate municipal units, with a continuing County government, because it affords better contact with local needs and improvements. May our citizens prepare for the task of larger opportunity, by taking part in the government of th elocal municipalities in our county. These localities carry out the principles of local self-government, self-determination through representative majority rule. Through this process, our people will learn to believe in an unchanged federal constitution.

As our population grows, we will educate the grown-ups, as well as the children to become the defenders of the ideals of the American Government. While foes assail the Constitution, and critics denounce it, our people, true Americans, strong in the faith of their fathers, and in their belief in the Republic, will solidify and uphold it.

The people of our County, through the type of its citizenship, will be a powerful agency in keeping the cosmopolitan population of the great city—our neighbor—fast to the ideals and convictions of the Constitution; in contributing to the strengthening of the moral forces of he city; in becoming leaders in all movements for the betterment of human kind. Such is our purpose.

At the very gateway to the glories of the Western hemisphere, our citizens should assist in causing the immigrant, who has passed from the chaos of the old world to the melting pot of the new, to understand that in accepting our Constitution he is embracing the greatest

charter of human liberty ever written; that the Constitution is the bulwark which separates the old world from a government conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal; that the constitution is a guarantee of liberty and equal opportunity.

And what people ever had a greater, and a more human task set for them? What a splendid adventure—the endeavor to become a positive force in sustaining the fundamental law of the land at the gateway of the metropolis.

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